

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, AS

SUBJECT: FRG IMPORTER REQUEST FOR EXPORT CERTIFICATION ON FOOD

REF: STATE 200243

1. SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL WAS DISCUSSED WITH OFFICIALS IN AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WHO GAVE AGATTACHE OFFICE UNQUALIFIED ASSURANCE THAT GOA WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EARLIER DECISION OF CODEX ALIMENTARIUS TO OPPOSE SYSTEM OF CERTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE RESIDUE LIMITS. GOA WILL ALSO GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO US POSITION REGARDING ACCEPTANCE PROPOSED PESTICIDE RESIDUE LEVELS RECOMMENDED BY CODEX. COMMITTEE, ALTHOUGH GOA ITSELF HAS SOME PROBLEMS TO GET THESE ACCEPTED BY AUSTRALIAN STATES. PROPOSED LEGISLATION IS EXPECTED TO OVERCOME THIS SHORTLY, AND FIRST ACCEPTANCES BY AUSTRALIA WILL CERTAINLY CONFORM TO CODEX TOLERANCE STANDARDS.

2. ASST. SECRETARY HAMMER OF AGRICULTURE, AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION LEADER TO CODEX, INDICATED IN PAST AUSTRALIA HAS EXPRESSED STRONG OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION, AND AGREES WITH US POSITION THAT SUCH CERTIFICATION IN MANY INSTANCES WOULD BE MEANINGLESS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE FOR PESTICIDES WITH A SHORT LIFE, FOR EXAMPLE IN GRAIN SHIPMENTS WHICH COULD HAVE A HIGH RESIDUE LEVEL AT TIME OF SHIP-
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MENT BUT AFTER VOYAGE OF THREE OR FOUR WEEKS

THROUGH TROPICS WOULD HAVE NEGLIGIBLE RESIDUE ON ARRIVAL. VALUE OF CERTIFICATION ALSO QUESTIONABLE ON BASIS OF TESTING PROCEDURES. ADA PESTICIDE CO-ORDINATOR SNELSON CURRENTLY CONDUCTING WORLD-WIDE SURVEY ON ACCURACY TESTING RESULTS, AND HAS FOUND TREMENDOUS DIVERGENCE NOT ONLY BETWEEN LABORATORIES USING DIFFERENT ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES, BUT ALSO WHEN USING SAME TECHNIQUES AND EVEN SAME OPERATOR. SNELSON WILL PRESENT RESULTS AT NEXT CODEX MEETING.

3. IN VIEW OF ABOVE AND ALSO HAVING REGARD TO RECENT CHANGES IN FORM OF ACCEPTANCE OF CODEX TOLERANCES, GOA STRONGLY SUPPORTS US STANCE. HOWEVER, HAMMER EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE ABOUT US CONCERN, AS HE FELT THAT GERMAN ATTITUDE ON TOLERANCES WAS SOFTENING RATHER THAN HARDENING. HE HAD SEVERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH GERMAN DELEGATION LEADER DR. BRESSAU DURING LAST CODEX MEETING, AND GATHERED THE IMPRESSION THAT GERMANY WAS BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT THE LOW TOLERANCES IN THEIR LEGISLATION WERE CONTRARY TO THE NEED FOR SOUND AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, AND IN FACT BRASSAU TOLD HIM THAT IN MANY INSTANCES THE TOLERANCES NOW PRESCRIBED COULD POSSIBLY BE INCREASED TENFOLD WITHOUT HAVING ANY TOXICOLOGICAL EFFECTS. HE DOES NOT THINK THAT GERMANY WILL PERSIST IN PRESSURING FOR A CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE, AND ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIAN EXPORTS TO GERMANY ARE PRESENTLY ONLY SMALL, HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT AGREE TO INSTITUTING SUCH A SYSTEM.
PERCIVAL

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